

U.S. sets new Cuba sanctions as Biden meets Cuban-Americans

By AAMER MADHANI and
E. EDUARDO CASTILLO

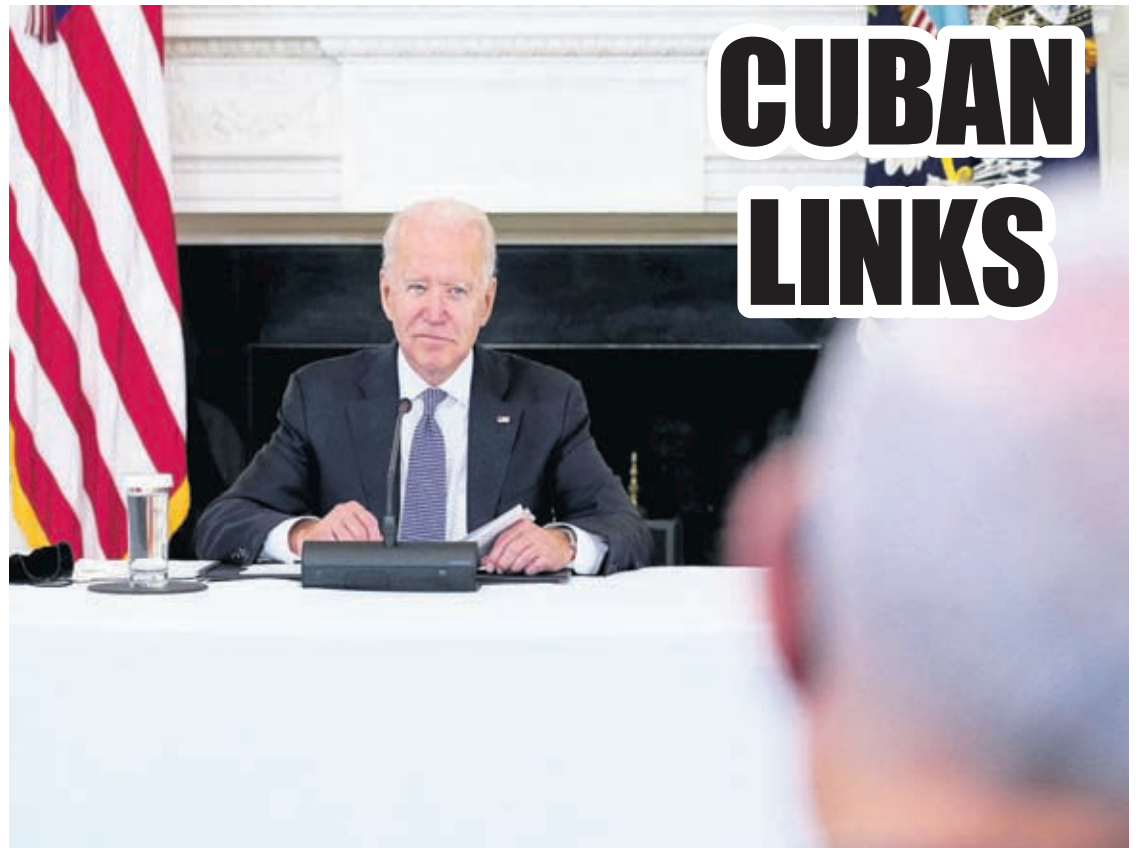
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration announced new sanctions on Friday against Cuba's national revolutionary police and its top two officials as the U.S. looks to increase pressure on the communist government following this month's protests on the island.

The Police Nacional Revolucionaria and the agency's director and deputy director, Oscar Callejas Valcarce and Eddie Sierra Arias, were targeted in the latest sanctions announced by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control. The police are part of Cuba's interior ministry, which was already the subject of a blanket designation by the Trump administration back in January.

"We hear the cries of freedom coming from the island. The United States is taking concerted action to bolster the cause of the Cuban people," President Joe Biden said at the start of a White House meeting with Cuban Americans not long after Treasury announced the sanctions.

Continued on Page 2



CUBAN LINKS

President Joe Biden, left, looks over towards Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., right, during a meeting with Cuban-American leaders in the State Dining Room of the White House in Washington, Friday, July 30, 2021.

Associated Press

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PAULA RIDERSTAP SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm	Happy Hour 12 - 1 / 4 - 6 / 9 - 10 *** PREMIUM BRANDS ***		KARAOKE HAPPY HOUR 9:00 - 11:00pm	WATER'S EDGE RESTAURANT & BAR		

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U.S. sets new Cuba sanctions as Biden meets Cuban-Americans

Continued from Front

The administration says it is considering a wide range of additional options in response to the protests, including providing internet access to Cubans, and has created a working group to review U.S. remittance policy to ensure that more of the money that Cuban Americans send home makes it directly into the hands of their families without the government taking a cut. Biden added that more sanctions were in the offing.

The White House meeting comes almost three weeks after unusual July 11 protests in which thousands of Cubans took to the streets in Havana and other cities to protest shortages, power outages and government policies. They were the first such protests since the 1990s.

The Cuban regime deployed the PNR to attack protesters, the Treasury Department said in a statement. The police were photographed confronting and arresting protesters in Havana, including mem-



President Joe Biden speaks during a meeting with Cuban-American leaders in the State Dining Room of the White House in Washington, Friday, July 30, 2021.

bers of the Movement of July 11 Mothers, a group founded to organize families of the imprisoned and disappeared, according to Treasury.

In Camagüey, a Catholic priest was beaten and arrested by the PNR while he was defending young protesters, according to Treasury. PNR officers also

beat a group of peaceful demonstrators, including several minors, and there have also been documented instances in which the PNR used clubs to break up peaceful protests across Cuba, Treasury said.

"The Treasury Department will continue to designate and call out by name those who facilitate the Cuban

regime's involvement in serious human rights abuse," said Andrea Gacki, director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control. "Today's action serves to further hold accountable those responsible for suppressing the Cuban people's calls for freedom and respect for human rights."

Among the Cuban Ameri-

can activists meeting with Biden was Yotuel Romero, one of the authors of the song "Patria y vida!" which has become a kind of anthem for the protests, said an official.

Others present included L. Felice Gorordo, CEO of the company eMerge Americas; Ana Sofía Peláez, founder of the Miami Freedom Project, and Miami's former mayor, Manny Díaz, and Sen. Robert Menendez, a New Jersey Democrat and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

White House officials said Biden would discuss the new sanctions as well as ways to potentially establish internet access for the Cuban people.

Internet access is a sensitive issue in Cuba. In the days before the recent protests, there were calls on social media for anti-government demonstrations. Cuba's government said anti-Castro groups in the United States have used social media, particularly Twitter, to campaign against it and blamed Twitter for doing nothing to stop it. □

Associated Press



In this July 30, 2013, file photo, Gary Gensler testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Chinese companies hoping to sell their shares in the United States must start making

more disclosures about their potential risks before U.S. regulators will allow them to list their stock.

U.S. regulators step up scrutiny of IPO hopefuls from China

The Securities and Exchange Commission announced the move Friday after Beijing said it would step up its supervision of Chinese companies listed overseas, including reviews of their cybersecurity.

SEC Chair Gary Gensler pointed in particular to Chinese businesses that use shell companies to get around Chinese rules blocking foreign ownership for their industries. Under these deals, the Chi-

nese business forms a shell company in the Cayman Islands or somewhere else. The shell company then sells its stock to investors after listing in New York.

The shell company has no ownership of the Chinese company. Instead, it has service contracts with it. These arrangements are called variable interest entities, or "VIEs."

"I worry that average investors may not realize that they hold stock in a shell company rather than

a China-based operating company," Gensler said. Gensler said he asked the SEC's staff to make sure such companies make several disclosures before an initial public offering of stock. Among them: They must make clear investors are buying shares of the shell company, not the China-based operating company, and that future actions by the Chinese government could significantly affect financial performance. □

First evacuation flight brings 221 Afghans, many kids, to US

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER

and MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The first flight evacuating Afghans who worked alongside Americans in Afghanistan brought more than 200 people, including scores of children and babies in arms, to new lives in the United States on Friday, and President Joe Biden said he was proud to welcome them home.

The launch of the evacuation flights, bringing out former interpreters and others who fear retaliation from Afghanistan's Taliban for having worked with American troops and civilians, highlights American uncertainty about how Afghanistan's government and military will fare after the last U.S. combat forces leave that country in the coming weeks.

Family members are accompanying the interpreters, translators and others on the flights out. The first evacuation flight, an airliner, carried 221 Afghans under the special visa program, including 57 children and 15 infants, according to an internal U.S. government document obtained by The Associated Press.

It touched down in Dulles, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C., after midnight, according to the FlightAware tracking service.

Friday's flight was "an important milestone as we



This July 2, 2009, photo shows Josh Habib, far left, a 53-year-old translator for the U.S. Marines, speaking with Afghan villagers and two Marines in the Nawa district of Afghanistan's Helmand province.

Associated Press

continue to fulfill our promise to the thousands of Afghan nationals who served shoulder-to-shoulder with American troops and diplomats over the last 20 years in Afghanistan," Biden said. He said he wanted to honor the military veterans, diplomats and others in the U.S. who have advocated for the Afghans.

"Most of all," Biden said in a statement, "I want to thank these brave Afghans for standing with the United States, and today, I am proud to say to them: 'Welcome home.'"

Secretary of State Antony

Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin lauded the Afghans for their work alongside Americans and said their arrival demonstrates the U.S. government's commitment to them. Friday's flight was all about "keeping promises," said Will Fischer, an Iraq war veteran and an advocate on veteran's issues.

But a refugee agency said the Biden administration appeared to be still scrambling to work out the resettlement of thousands more of the Afghans, and it urged Biden to bring them quickly to the U.S. or a U.S.

territory, such as Guam.

"To date, there is simply no clear plan as to how the vast majority of our allies will be brought to safety," Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, president of the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service resettlement agency, said of the Afghan interpreters.

The Biden administration calls the effort Operation Allies Refuge. The operation has broad backing from Republican and Democratic lawmakers and from veterans groups. Supporters cite repeated instances of Taliban forces targeting

Afghans who worked with Americans or with the Afghan government.

Congress on Thursday overwhelmingly approved legislation that would allow an additional 8,000 visas and \$500 million in funding for the Afghan visa program.

The United States has been talking with Qatar and Kuwait about temporarily hosting thousands of other Afghan interpreters who are much further behind in their visa application process than Friday's arrivals. But U.S. officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss negotiations, said Friday that no deal had been closed with those two countries. Concerns about housing Afghans who have not completed their security screenings and uncertainty on the American side about finding funding for the massive relocation effort have remained obstacles, the U.S. officials said.

Biden announced earlier this year the U.S. would withdraw all its troops from Afghanistan by Sept. 11, honoring a withdrawal agreement struck by former President Donald Trump. He later said the U.S. military operation would end on Aug. 31, calling it "overdue." Some administration officials have expressed surprise at the extent and speed of Taliban gains of territory in the countryside since then. □

Justice says IRS must give Trump tax returns to Congress

By MARK SHERMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department, in a reversal, says the Treasury Department must provide the House Ways and Means Committee former President Donald Trump's tax returns, apparently ending a long legal showdown over the records.

In a memo dated Friday, Justice's Office of Legal Counsel said the committee chairman "has invoked sufficient reasons for requesting the former President's tax information" and that under fed-

eral law, "Treasury must furnish the information to the Committee."

The 39-page memo is signed by Dawn Johnsen, installed by the Biden administration as the acting head of the legal counsel office. During the Trump administration, then-Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said he wouldn't turn over the tax returns because he concluded they were being sought by Democrats who control the House of Representatives for partisan reasons. The committee sued for the records under a fed-

eral law that says the Internal Revenue Service "shall furnish" the returns of any taxpayer to a handful of top lawmakers. The committee said it needed Trump's taxes for an investigation into whether he complied with tax law.

Trump's Justice Department defended Mnuchin's refusal and Trump himself also intervened to try to prevent the materials from being turned over to Congress. Under a court order from January, Trump would have 72 hours to object after the Biden administration formally changes



In this July 11, 2021, file photo former president Donald Trump speaks at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Dallas, Texas.

Associated Press

the government's position in the lawsuit. □

U.S. passport delays lead to long lines of would-be travelers

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER
and EUGENE GARCIA
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) —

Britt Johnson showed up around midnight to the West Los Angeles Federal Building, hoping to apply for a rushed passport when the office opened at 7 a.m. Johnson, eager to visit a dying relative in Mexico, was in line with hundreds of would-be travelers mid-morning Thursday when a security guard announced that walk-ins for passport applications would no longer be taken there.

The disappointment in the crowd has been felt across the U.S. at passport offices, which have been overwhelmed by people ready to travel again as COVID-19 restrictions gradually have lifted in recent months.

The pent-up demand for passports has swelled wait times to between 12 and 18 weeks, according to the State Department. That's caused many like Johnson to seek expedited appointments at understaffed passport offices. Those now take up to 12 weeks.

"It's pretty urgent," Johnson said of his travel plans. "It's pretty important to me right now. So I'm gonna do my



This May 25, 2021, file photo shows a U.S. Passport cover in Washington.

Associated Press

best to try to get this thing." Now, his only options are to try to schedule it online or by phone. Marvella Carson, who was hoping to attend a cousin's wedding in Jamaica, said she's tried both, with no luck. "You can't get through. You can't get on their website. You can't get through on the phone," Carson

said, waiting outside the federal building in Los Angeles. She's resigned herself to the fact that she's probably not going to make the wedding. After more than a year of pandemic-related lockdowns, people are ready to travel again, but the State Department closed many of its offices last year

in an effort to keep employees safe, creating an enormous backlog. That's because of ripple effects from the pandemic that caused extreme disruptions to the process at domestic issuance facilities and overseas embassies and consulates. The department says a backlog of 1.5 million to 2 million passport requests

means that most applications submitted now probably will not be processed until the fall.

Rachel Arndt, deputy assistant secretary of state for passport services, said this month that the department is increasing staffing throughout the United States as pandemic restrictions are eased. But she said Americans needing to apply for or renew a passport should do so at least six months ahead of when they plan to travel.

Those without immediate travel plans are encouraged to renew their passports by mail.

Meanwhile, the State Department and Department of Homeland Security have taken steps to ease issues related to Americans abroad with expired passports who are trying to return home.

The departments announced in May that U.S. citizens who are overseas and whose passports expired on or after Jan. 1, 2020, would be able to use their documents to reenter the United States until Dec. 31, 2021. That provision does not apply to travel between other countries unless it is a transit stop. □

Flight attendants report high frequency of unruly passengers



In this Dec. 10, 2020, file photo, an electronic sign warns travelers to maintain social distance in the terminal of Denver International Airport in Denver.

Associated Press

By DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Nearly one in five flight attendants say they have witnessed physical incidents involving passengers this year, and their union is calling for criminal prosecution of people who

act up on planes. A union survey supports what airlines and federal officials have been saying: There has been a surge in unruly passengers this year, who sometimes become violent. The most common trigger

is passengers who refuse to follow the federal requirement that they wear face masks during flights, according to the survey by the Association of Flight Attendants. Alcohol is the next largest factor, with flight delays also playing a role, according to the union. The union said nearly 5,000 flight attendants responded to its survey from June 25 through July 14 and 85% said they have dealt at least once this year with an unruly passenger. The union said 17% reported seeing a "physical incident," including touching, slapping or striking a flight attendant or another passenger. Some said they were cursed or yelled at, and some said they were followed through the airport and harassed after the flight ended, said

the union, which represents flight attendants at United, Alaska, Spirit and several smaller carriers. "When people are facing jail time for acting out on a plane, we suddenly see some sobering up, and we need some sobering up," Sara Nelson, the union's president, told reporters. A few cases have led to criminal charges, and crews sometimes ask police to meet the plane when it lands. In May, a 28-year-old woman was arrested on felony charges in San Diego after a video showed a young female passenger punching a Southwest flight attendant in the face. Such cases are usually filed by local prosecutors — the FAA lacks authority to pursue criminal charges. The FAA said this week that

airlines have reported more than 3,600 cases of unruly passengers this year — figures were not kept for prior years. Nearly three-fourths involved disputes over masks. The agency has announced dozens of proposed fines, the largest being \$52,500 for a man who tried to open the cockpit door and then struck a flight attendant on a Delta Air Lines flight in December. The FAA said it is investigating 600 other cases this year — nearly double the number of investigations started in 2019 and 2020 combined. In January FAA Administrator Stephen Dickson announced a "zero-tolerance policy" in which passengers can face immediate enforcement action instead of warnings. □

U.S. warns China is building more nuclear missile silos

By HUIZHONG WU and JON GAMBRELL

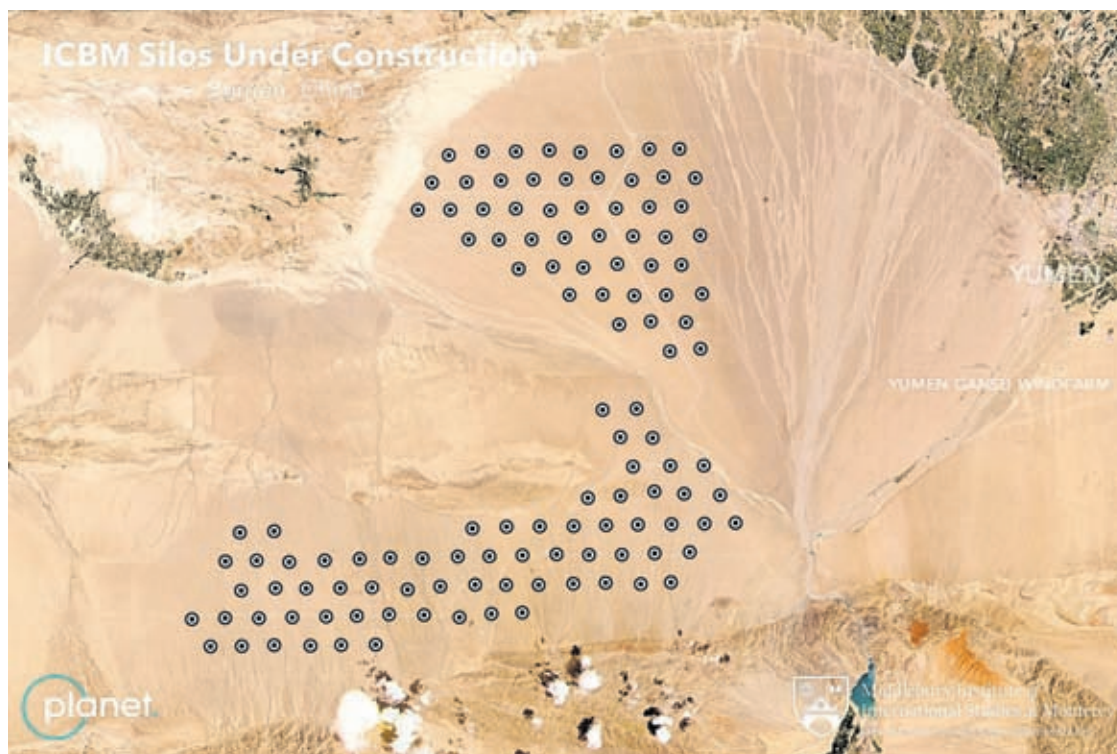
Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — The U.S. military is warning about what analysts have described as a major expansion of China's nuclear missile silo fields at a time of heightened tension between Beijing and Washington.

Researchers at the Federation of American Scientists estimate that China has approximately 250 underground missile silos under construction after they used satellite imagery to identify a new field being built in western China.

U.S. Strategic Command tweeted a link Wednesday to a story in The New York Times on the federation's findings, which were published this week.

"The public has discovered what we have been saying all along about the growing threat the world faces and the veil of secrecy that surrounds it," said Strategic Command, which oversees America's nuclear arsenal. The field in the Xinjiang region is the second one reported this summer. In June, researchers at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in California



This June 4, 2021, satellite image provided by Planet Labs Inc. that has been annotated by experts at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at Middlebury Institute of International Studies shows what analysts believe is a field of intercontinental ballistic missile silos near Yumen, China.

identified another field under construction in neighboring Gansu province.

China has not commented on the reports. Asked about the latest one, the Foreign Ministry said Friday that it was not aware of the situation.

The reports come at a time when relations between the U.S. and China have plunged to their worst level

in decades. The two nations remain sharply at odds over a range of issues, including trade, technology, cybersecurity, human rights and China's increasingly assertive foreign policy under President Xi Jinping. The expansion of China's nuclear force would likely factor into any U.S. calculations for potential military confrontations over flash-

points such as Taiwan or the South China Sea.

The outspoken editor of the state-owned Global Times newspaper said this week that U.S. institutions and the media are hyping the reports about the missile fields to pressure China, but that the nation shouldn't be cowed.

"Look at what American politicians are saying about

China and look at the provocative actions of their warplanes and warships near China," Hu Xijin said. "China must fully step up construction of its military force and nuclear deterrence as the cornerstone of its national security."

Both sites are around 800 square kilometers (300 square miles). Ground-based silos can house intercontinental ballistic missiles. Spreading the silos across such a wide area makes targeting the field much more complicated. Analysts say some of the silos may serve as decoys as well.

"The Chinese missile silo program constitutes the most extensive silo construction since the U.S. and Soviet missile silo construction during the Cold War," researchers Matt Korda and Hans Kristensen wrote in the Federation of American Scientists report.

Kuo Yu-jen, a defense studies expert at the Institute for National Policy Research in Taiwan, said it's very difficult to get an accurate count of the underground silos of any country, but that the recently released satellite imagery looks "very, very similar" to missile silos. □

Associated Press

U.S. bids 'do svidaniya' to Russian staff at Moscow embassy

By DARIA LITVINOVA and MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — The United States said Friday it has laid off nearly 200 local staffers working for its diplomatic missions in Russia ahead of an Aug. 1 deadline set by the Kremlin for their dismissal. The move is just the latest in a series of measures taken by both sides that have strained U.S.-Russia relations.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the layoffs are regrettable and something the U.S. had hoped to avert, despite a sharp deterioration in ties between Moscow and Washington, which show few signs of improvement.

"These unfortunate mea-

sures will severely impact the U.S. mission to Russia's operations, potentially including the safety of our personnel as well as our ability to engage in diplomacy with the Russian government," Blinken said in a statement.

"Although we regret the actions of the Russian government forcing a reduction in our services and operations, the United States will follow through on our commitments while continuing to pursue a predictable and stable relationship with Russia," he said. The Russian Foreign Ministry was silent on the matter and the Russian Embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a query. Russia earlier this year an-

nounced a ban on almost all non-American staff at the embassy in Moscow and consulates in Yekaterinburg and Vladivostok. That came in response to U.S. expulsions of Russian diplomats and tit-for-tat closures of numerous diplomatic facilities in each country.

Those expulsions and closures came in the context of U.S. sanctions imposed over Russian interference in the 2020 U.S. presidential election, the poisoning of a former Russian spy in Britain, and the arrest of opposition figure Alexei Navalny and crackdown on his supporters, as well as involvement in the Solar-Wind hack of U.S. federal agencies. All are activities



In this file photo taken on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, The U.S. Embassy and the National flag are seen in Moscow, Russia.

Associated Press

that Russia has denied.

After the announcement of the ban, the embassy suspended routine consular services and since May has been processing immigrant visas only in the case of life-or-death emergencies.

The suspension of consular services has also left Russian businessmen, ex-

change students and romantic partners adrift because they are no longer able to obtain U.S. visas in Russia.

Still, the U.S. had been cautiously optimistic that the Russian decision might be reversed at last month's meeting between Presidents Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin in Geneva. □

UN: 100,000 children in Ethiopia's Tigray face deadly hunger

By CARA ANNA

Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) —

More than 100,000 children in Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region could face the most extreme and life-threatening form of malnutrition in the next year, the United Nations children's agency warned on Friday, as humanitarian aid remains blocked from the region of some 6 million people.

The U.N. estimate, a ten-fold increase over the usual caseload in Tigray, is based on "essentially the scenario we're seeing now, in which the conflict escalates and food access is restricted," Marixie Mercado with UNICEF's emergency response team told The Associated Press.

The warning comes as high-level officials from the U.N. and United States visit Ethiopia over the next several days to press the government to lift what the U.S. has described as a "siege" of Tigray and as some 200 food-laden U.N. trucks are stuck on the only remaining road into the region.

The world's worst hunger crisis in a decade is unfolding



A Joint UN and INGOs team carries out a rapid response mechanism in response to the humanitarian needs of communities affected by the ongoing conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region, Monday July 19, 2021.

ing in Tigray, where the U.S. says up to 900,000 people now face famine conditions and international food security experts say the crucial planting season "has largely been missed" because of the war.

The UNICEF estimate, based on screenings of more than 430,000 children during the nine-month conflict, comes after a rare visit

to two districts in Tigray that had been "virtually inaccessible," Gijet and Wajirat. While the AP has reported on scores of people dying of starvation in another inaccessible Tigray district, Mercado said she did not hear of any starvation deaths on her visit. But she warned of "horrifying numbers of acutely malnourished" people and

expressed frustration as food, fuel, cash and other supplies are in short supply. While access inside Tigray has improved after a dramatic turn in the war in June as Ethiopian soldiers withdrew and the government declared a unilateral cease-fire, the U.N. has said aid workers are running out of the means to help. "You can't bring services

to people without fuel," an exasperated Mercado said, adding that during the visit to the previously inaccessible districts "we were just overwhelmed by the numbers of mothers and children who showed up and desperately wanted some help." Ethiopia's government has blamed the aid blockade on the resurgent Tigray forces who have retaken much of the region and crossed into the neighboring Amhara and Afar regions, but a senior official with the U.S. Agency for International Development this week told the AP that is "100% not the case."

USAID administrator Samantha Power is set to visit Ethiopia next week to press for access.

Meanwhile, new U.N. humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths is visiting Tigray as part of a six-day tour in Ethiopia meant to spotlight the crisis, while there is little sign of negotiations in sight between Ethiopia's government and the Tigray forces who had long dominated Ethiopia's government and military before being sidelined by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. □

Associated Press

Regional forces join offensive against Mozambique extremists

By ANDREW MELDRUM

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) —

Rwandan troops have joined Mozambican forces to launch a major offensive against Islamic rebels in northern Mozambique as more troops arrive from South Africa and other neighboring countries to battle the insurgency. Less than two weeks after landing in Mozambique, the 1,000 soldiers from Rwanda fought alongside Mozambican troops to regain control of Awasse, a strategic town in northern Cabo Delgado province, according to the Mozambican government.

"We have attacked and re-occupied the enemy position at Awasse," President Filipe Nyusi said in a broadcast to the nation earlier this week. He said

three other towns also were retaken from the rebels.

The new offensive is seen as a drive to regain control of Mocimboa da Praia, the Indian Ocean port that the rebels have held for nearly a year.



In this photo supplied by the Mozambican Presidency, President Filipe Nyusi, front right, during a visit to his Defence and Security Force Troops in Northern Mozambique, Friday, July 9, 2021.

Associated Press

The joint forces have also been fighting the rebels in Palma and appear to be trying to secure the nearby Afungi peninsula where the French firm Total was forced to stop operations in its \$20 billion liquified natural gas project, ac-

cording to Cabo Ligado, a newsletter about the extremist violence.

Rwanda's forces killed 14 extremists, that country's army spokesman announced Thursday. Mozambican media report that both sides have suffered casualties.

The campaign against the rebels will be further supported by troops arriving from South Africa, leading the contingent being sent by the 16-nation Southern African Development Community to assist Mozambique.

South Africa, the regional powerhouse, will send about 1,500 troops at a cost of nearly 1 billion rand (\$68 million), President Cyril Ramaphosa informed parliament this week. A South African general is to lead the regional force.

Zimbabwe announced Thursday that it will deploy 300 soldiers as trainers and advisers, and Botswana sent 300 troops to Mozambique earlier this week. Angola and Botswana have also announced they are sending forces.

The countries of southern Africa are giving military support to Mozambique to try to prevent the extremist rebels from expanding their foothold in the region. Since its start in 2017, the insurgency has been blamed for more than 3,000 deaths, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project.

The rebels, allied to the Islamic State group, have beheaded scores of people and imposed Shariah law in areas they have seized. □



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U.S. warns China is building more nuclear missile silos

By HUIZHONG WU and
JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

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A migrant sleeps near the beach in Necocli, Colombia, at sunrise Thursday, July 29, 2021.

Associated Press

be cowed.

"Look at what American politicians are saying about China and look at the provocative actions of their warplanes and warships

near China," Hu Xijin said.

"China must fully step up construction of its military force and nuclear deterrence as the cornerstone of its national security." □

Haiti's new PM pledges to hold elections soon after slaying

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haiti's newly installed prime minister, Ariel Henry, held his first press conference on Wednesday as he pledged to hold elections as soon as possible following the slaying of President Jovenel Moïse.

Henry said the government's mission is to hold free, honest and transparent elections with a large voter turnout as he stressed the need for security. He also said he wants to fight unemployment and re-establish confidence in the country's judicial system, adding that he has been meeting with civil society leaders and others since being sworn in on July 20. "The discussions up until



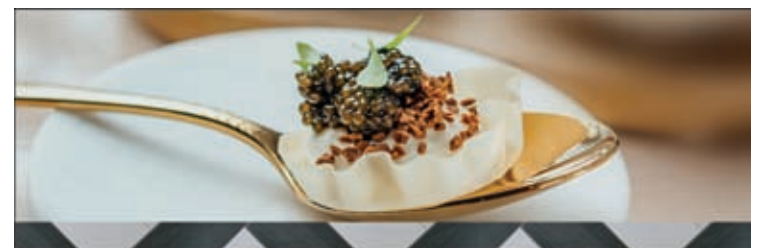
New Prime Minister Ariel Henry walks up a set of stairs escorted by his security detail after his appointment in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Tuesday, July 20, 2021, weeks after the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse at his home.

Associated Press

now are difficult but constructive," he said, without offering any details or taking any questions.

The press conference, which lasted less than 10 minutes, was held just hours after Henry met with a new Cabinet be-

hind closed doors. He only briefly mentioned the investigation into the July 7 attack at Moïse's private home in which the first lady was seriously injured, saying that those responsible need to be brought to justice. □



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Short history of the beginnings of baseball in Aruba

By Clyde Harms

ORANJESTAD — Baseball was played on the island of Aruba in the 1930's, but only by United States expatriates working for LAGO and living inside the LAGO colony. Jim Bluejacket, the legendary US Indian who had played in two major league teams, worked for LAGO during 14 years and was a key factor in the growth of the popularity of the game in the colony. There is no record of Bluejacket ever playing outside the colony.

Outside the colony, the game of baseball was introduced to Aruba by Venezuelan immigrants and sailors on the Venezuelan fishing boats that used Aruba as their home port. They formed pick-up teams and played games on Sundays on an open field behind what is now the Court of Justice. One of the Venezuelans that comes to mind is Felix Garrido, grandfather of our current Prime-Minister.

In the late 30s the leader of this group was Raúl Aparicio, a cousin of Luis Aparicio who is now enshrined in the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. The Aparicios were evidently very good at sports. Raúl had two brothers who also played baseball, René and Roman. Rosendo, his only brother who did not play baseball became a professional soccer player in the Venezuelan league. Rosendo was nicknamed "Cabeza de oro" (golden head) for a memorable header he scored to win a game for his team.

Interestingly, it was in Aruba that Luis Aparicio played his first game outside of Venezuela. This took place



in 1950 when he played shortstop for the school he attended. Later he played for "Cabimas" in a double-header of the Venezuelan Western League. These official games of the league were authorized to be played in Aruba by the Professional Baseball Organization of Venezuela. Several others who played in those games have also been enshrined.

Luis Aparicio's father was the super popular Luis "El Grande" (the great one) after whom the baseball stadium in Maracaibo is named. He and his brother owned the professional baseball teams "Gavilanes" which later became the "Aguilas", and the "Cabimas".

In the early '40s, another group, mostly immigrants from the Dominican Republic also became very active with pickup teams. Some of these remained active in baseball well into the early '50s; as umpires, managers even as players. Among these were Nestor "Pantin" Guerrero who also had a musical band. Perhaps not so coincidentally, many of Pantin's players were also musicians. Luthai Pantophlet who umpired many years was a well-known drummer. Gaston Hazel was a bongo player; José Bryson and the brothers Nicholson, Teddy and

Julio, all played several instruments.

In San Nicolas, baseball was played on the grounds next to where the LAGO Sport Park (now Laveist Sport Park) was officially inaugurated in March 1941.

During the WWII years, baseball got a big lift from the influx of Puerto Rican and US soldiers stationed here. As LAGO was playing a very important role in the struggle against Hitler, it was able to get all the sports equipment needed here to allow more people to participate.

In the '40s only the Lago Sports Park organized baseball championship games. The first teams to participate were Artraco, (Aruba Trading Co.), Esso Garage and Botica San Lucas. In 1945 Venezuelan employees of the Lago refinery participated under the name of "Cafenol", a very popular Venezuelan coffee brand. Two other groups of Venezuelan immigrants formed the teams "Cerveceria" (named after the iconic team Cerveceria Caracas), and "Venezuela", although not all members of these teams were Venezuelans. This was also the year that the team sponsored by Roxy Café started to play as "Dodgers".

Dodgers became the dominant baseball powerhouse till the 1950s.

Other teams that entered the baseball scene in the late 1940s: Pepsi Cola (Oranjestad) and St. Thomas Boys (former students of St. Thomas College, Oranjestad). "Baby Ruth" in San Nicolas played initially under the name "Camel" and "Barnes' Ramblers" the only team consisting of Lago Colony players to participate in the Lago Sport Park championships. "Red Rock Cola" was formed in Oranjestad in 1950.

In 1952 the team Pepsi Cola became "Nesbitt's" and had players of seven countries, including two American expats from Lago Colony.

In 1950 a group of prominent members of the Aruba community founded the Amateur Baseball Bond of Aruba (ABBA) to give structure to the management of the sport and became the organizers of official championship games. While maintaining the existing teams in a league that was referred to as A-class, ABBA established a B-class league in which the "Budweiser" and "Braves" played the first years.

By 1952 Aruba became a member of the International Amateur Baseball Association and fielded a team managed by Joe Proterra, (former pitcher of "Barnes' Ramblers"), that would play for the first time ever in the Amateur Baseball World Series that took place in Havana, Cuba in September. Surprisingly, Aruba won two of its six games and became the darling of the Havana fans. Nell Harms of the Aruban team was named the "Outstanding



player of the week" for his performance against Honduras. He allowed just two hits, struck out 15 and hit the only homerun of the game. Joe Cambria, the famous scout for the Washington Senators offered him a contract, but Nel was not interested, but the next year, at the Amateur Baseball World Series in Caracas, Venezuela, Nel and Ruben Phillips did sign and in 1954 they played professional baseball the Georgia-Florida League and the Texas-New Mexico League. They were the first Arubans to play professionally, but not the only ones.

During the games in Havana, contacts were made with the organizers of Little League Baseball in Cuba which eventually resulted in the introduction of Little League in Aruba. Little League of Aruba has been extremely successful: It has produced many players who earned baseball scholarships at universities in the United States, a few who played professionally in the Netherlands and different countries in the Caribbean and five who reached the major leagues: Calvin Maduro, Eugene Kingsale, Radhames Dijkhoff, Sydney Ponson, and Xander Boggaerts one of the brightest stars of Boston Red Sox. □

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PALM BEACH — Sundays are to enjoy to the fullest, who does not agree on that. Corals Restaurant at the Holiday Inn Resort Aruba understands this as no other. For a great price you get great value: an extensive, scrumptious, full varied Sunday Brunch Buffet with bottomless mimosas. Take a seat in the cool dining room with full window view at the big blue. This is the definition of a chill Sunday start with big taste!

"It all started with the perception of the ideal Sunday. Sundays are for brunch and mimosas and it appears a trend to take it easy in the morning and indulge into a blissful brunch", says Eva Ruiz, Marketing Director of the resort. "Who does not enjoy to wake up late on a Sunday and take it easy with a coffee, mimosas and everything you crave for?" The Holiday Inn Resort Aruba started this relaxing brunch in February and is positively surprised with the overwhelming enthusiasm. Guests of the resort, outside guests and locals find their way to their favorite brunch spot. Chef Aldwin Donata could not be happier. "We change the menu every Sunday keeping in the all-time favorites. It is great to see that so many find their way to us, but honestly there



is no place where you get this quality brunch for this price", he says with pride.

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yourself and your loved ones because you deserve to maximize your day and get the best start.

For more information call +297 586 3600 or email the resort directly at hiaruba@ihg.com.

Every Sunday from 11:00am to 2:00pm the Holiday Inn Resort Aruba is welcoming you, chef Donata and his crew will await you at Corals Restaurant for the \$35 Brunch Buffet (children 6-12 \$17.50) and children under 5 are free. ☐

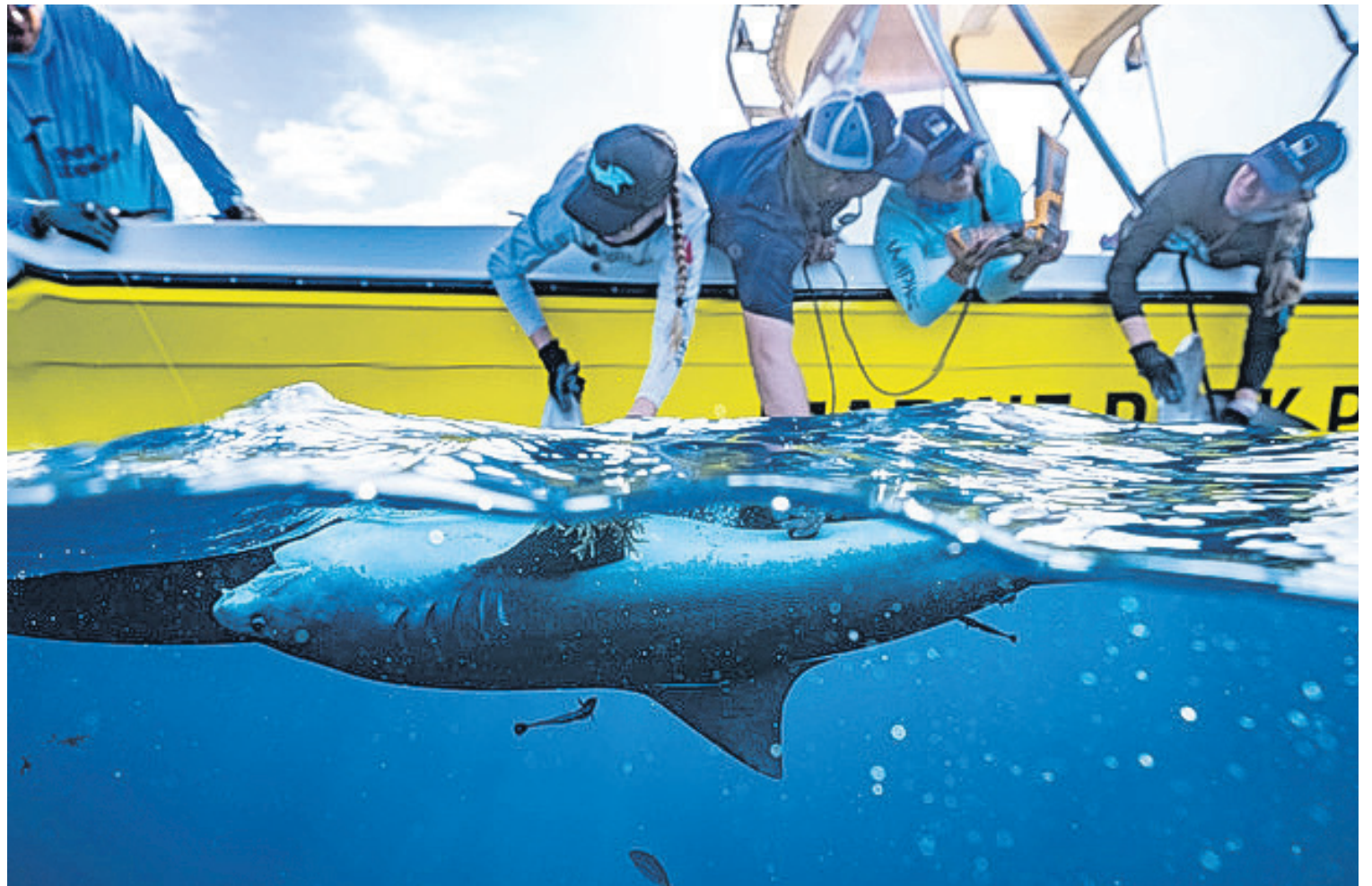


Holiday Inn

Expedition on the Saba Bank to Enhance Tiger Shark Protection

ORANJESTAD — Starting August 1, 2021 a team of researchers will spend a week on the Saba Bank investigating the life-cycle of tiger sharks. Researchers will investigate the migration routes, where and when tiger sharks breed so they can protect them better within the Dutch Caribbean's Yarari Marine Mammal and Shark Sanctuary as well as beyond. In this expedition members from the Saba Conservation Foundation (SCF), Nature Foundation St. Maarten (NFSXM), St. Eustatius National Parks (STENAPA), STI-NAPA Bonaire, the Aruba National Parks Foundation (FPNA), the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) and World Wildlife Fund for Nature the Netherlands (WWF-NL) will participate.

In 2016, the Saba Conservation Foundation, Nature Foundation St. Maarten, and Sharks for Kids partnered together as part of DCNA's Save our Sharks Project funded by the Dutch National Postcode Lottery. Since then, satellite



tagging of tiger sharks has been conducted on the Saba Bank and around Sint Maarten. Through this research we now know that tiger sharks in Dutch waters travel throughout the Ca-

ribbean basin, with most of these tagged sharks being sexually mature females. During the upcoming expedition the researchers aim to not only tag and track more tiger sharks to further

investigate the life cycle, but they will also measure if and how large the pups inside pregnant tiger sharks are. This will help to determine if the Saba Bank is in fact a breeding ground for tiger sharks, one of the main goals of the expedition.

The other objective is to see where these transboundary sharks migrate to in order to better understand the importance of the Yarari Marine Mammal and Shark Sanctuary and protect other geographical areas. The Yarari Sanctuary was established on September 1, 2015 and aims to protect marine mammals, sharks, and rays throughout the waters of Bonaire, Saba, and since September 2018, St. Eustatius. Collaboration between not only the six Dutch Caribbean islands but countries across the wider Caribbean as a whole is necessary in order to protect and conserve these essential species and ecosystems. Therefore the Caribbean Shark Coalition was recently formed to collaborate better in the entire Greater Caribbean region. Celebrated on July 28 each year, World Nature Conservation

Day acknowledges that a healthy environment is the foundation for a stable and healthy society. This includes a healthy ocean which, undoubtedly, depends on sharks. Sharks are large top predators that serve a critical role in maintaining balance in the marine ecosystem. Sharks help keep their prey population healthy by eating the weak while also affecting their prey's distribution. In healthy oceans, sharks help to maintain stable fish stocks and healthy coral reefs and seagrass beds, which is important for the fisheries and the economy of the islands.

The Tiger Shark research expedition is coordinated by the DCNA and generously funded by WWF-NL through the Biodiversity Funds and the Dutch National Postcode Lottery. For more information on the Pregnant Tiger Shark Expedition, follow the participating organizations on Facebook, Instagram or DCNA's website (<https://dcnanature.org/news/>).

Photo credit: Sami Kattan

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Robinhood CEO tells AP it's eyeing expansion beyond trading

STAN CHOE

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Robinhood has already changed how people trade stocks and who's doing it. Now its sights are on the rest of the financial industry.

Shares of Robinhood Markets traded for the first time on the Nasdaq Thursday, following the highly anticipated initial offering by the company that's drawn a new generation of investors into the market and forced the industry to stop charging fees for trading. Shares swung sharply through the day before ending with an 8.4% drop. But while the IPO is a milestone, it's not a culmination, according to CEO Vlad Tenev.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Tenev said he wants Robinhood to be the only app that people use on their phones for money. That covers everything from depositing paychecks to paying bills to splitting payments with friends.

Tenev, who founded Robinhood with fellow Stanford graduate Baiju Bhatt in 2013, also said he accepts how his company has become synonymous with the boom in trading by smaller-pocketed and novice investors, for both good and ill. Such investors are getting their first chance to grow their wealth, after years of falling further behind stock-owning households, but they also have been criticized for making too many risky trades with their newfound app.

Early this year, they almost singlehandedly sent GameStop and a group of other "meme stocks" to heights professional investors called dangerously irrational. The mania led to big losses for some hedge funds, multiple halts in trading for stocks and congressional hearings asking who was getting hurt. It also forced Robinhood to temporarily bar its customers from making some GameStop trades, after it suddenly had to post much more in collateral to its clearinghouses that process its trades.



Robinhood CEO Vlad Tenev poses for a picture during an interview about the company that introduced a new generation of investors into the stock market and forced the industry to stop charging fees for trading, Wednesday, July 28, 2021, in New York.

Associated Press

Critics say the company based in Menlo Park, California, encourages unsophisticated investors to make dangerous bets by making it seem too much like a game. But Tenev said he wants his app to encourage everyone to profit from the stock market, not just the elite. This interview has been edited for clarity and for length.

Q: This year started off rocky for Robinhood with the GameStop saga. Is the IPO a sign the company has turned the corner?

A: I think it's an amazing milestone, and it's really a celebration of the individual investor. Individual investors have undoubtedly seen a resurgence over the past few years, and Robinhood has been part of that story. We think there's a lot more we can still do to serve the individual investor.

Q: Your app makes it fun and easy to trade, but that's something you get criticism for, both on Wall Street and from regulators. Is that criticism justified?

A: I don't think so. We accept that there's always things that we could be doing better, and we're investing a lot in making sure that customers are educated. Ultimately, though,

more access is better. And the stock market in particular has been a great source of wealth creation for so many people. It's been reserved for the 1% for a very long time. So we're proud to give access and to make it easier for people to use.

Q: Why is Robinhood the lightning rod for so much criticism?

A: Well, I think that Robinhood has become synonymous with retail investing and the individual investor in America, and with that comes good things and the downsides of it as well. You hear "Robinhood investors," and that's kind of become the new term for retail investors. So I think it's a positive thing, that helps get the brand out there. But whenever there's criticism for the industry, since we represent it, we to some degree have to answer to it.

Q: When you look at your customers, do you think they see it as entertainment at all?

A: Well, I think that in general, it's important for our customers to enjoy using our products. I think if there's no enjoyment to it, if there's no joy in your investing, you're just going to do less of it. So we want to make our products easy to use, but it's also

important for people to be educated, to be informed. And that's why we've been investing so much and making sure our products are safe and we provide all of the educational tools that our customers need to succeed.

Q: When GameStop was shaking Wall Street, people were saying it was the "Robinhood gang" taking over the market. Does the use of that term bother you?

A: If it's being discussed or used pejoratively, certainly, because it's such a broad brush. What you're seeing is a lot of these customers building portfolios, and they're largely buying and accumulating stocks. So I think a lot of people are engaging in long-term beneficial behaviors. So it is a little bit unfair that a large group of people is sort of painted with the brush of a relatively small group of people.

Q: What do you think personally when people say Robinhood makes the stock market a casino, or more of a casino than it would be otherwise?

A: I think it's a big, big mischaracterization because if you look at it, the stock market has been one of the greatest wealth creation tools. We should be encouraging access to it and

not denigrating people that are able to use it. So in a sense, you're hearing when wealthier customers are engaging in the stock market, it's investing. But when the rest of us are accessing the stock market, it's gambling. And I think that rhetoric just has to go.

Q: One out of every \$20 Robinhood made at the start of the year came just from dogecoin. How important are Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies to the long-term strategy?

A: It's certainly an area we're interested in. I mean, it's in many ways the future of the financial industry, according to a lot of people. So we want to make sure that we're there, and we're serving customers well as they're interested in exploring this new asset class. So, no doubt, crypto has been very culturally relevant through the first six months of the year.

Q: What will Robinhood look like in the future?

A: Over time, we want to be the single money app, the most trusted and most culturally relevant money app worldwide. So, everything that you use your money for, you should be able to do through Robinhood.

Anytime you receive a paycheck direct deposit, we'd like you to do that through Robinhood. Your emergency fund, your bill pay, your day-to-day spending, we'd like for customers to use us for that. And of course, all types of investing ranging from more discretionary investing to long-term retirement savings as well.

Q: After the IPO, you may be worth more than \$2 billion. Are there any social causes that you're thinking of championing?

A: I haven't started thinking too much about what I'm going to do post-IPO, I've been very much focused on the company and the mission. But we'll see. I mean, I think Robinhood's mission itself is a cause that I believe in very strongly. Financial empowerment and inclusion for all is something we believe in very strongly. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 40 Tennis

1 Singer star
McEntire Chris

5 Sprawling 41 Brawl
stories

10 Pol's 42 College
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12 Fable **DOWN**
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Yesterday's answer

11 Naruhito, 27 Death
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17 Futile 28 Send
20 Winter overseas

21 Lock 29 Takes
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23 Cattle 31 Small
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25 Sacred 36 Put away
26 Stinging 38 Director

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7-31

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-31 **CRYPTOQUOTE**

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MT MDS GK O JDAOJIOCUD
XTJKD. STM O JDAOJIOCUD
AOMXDAOMGYGOS. — KOAZDU
ETXSKTS

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: CHILDREN HAVE NEVER BEEN VERY GOOD AT LISTENING TO THEIR ELDERS. BUT THEY HAVE NEVER FAILED TO IMITATE THEM. — JAMES BALDWIN



Honolulu Police Acting Lt. Joseph O'Neal demonstrates a robotic dog in Honolulu, Friday May 14, 2021.

Associated Press

Robotic police dogs: Useful hounds or dehumanizing machines?

By MATT O'BRIEN and
JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER
Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — If you're homeless and looking for temporary shelter in Hawaii's capital, expect a visit from a robotic police dog that will scan your eye to make sure you don't have a fever.

That's just one of the ways public safety agencies are starting to use Spot, the best-known of a new commercial category of robots that trot around with animal-like agility.

The handful of police officials experimenting with the four-legged machines say they're just another tool, like existing drones and simple wheeled robots, to keep emergency responders out of harm's way as they scout for dangers. But privacy watchdogs — the human kind — warn that police are secretly rushing to buy the robots without setting safeguards against aggressive, invasive or dehumanizing uses. In Honolulu, the police department spent about \$150,000 in federal pandemic relief money to buy their Spot from robotics firm Boston Dynamics for use at a government-run tent city near the airport.

"Because these people are houseless it's considered OK to do that," said Jongwook Kim, legal director at the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii. "At some point it will come out again for some different use after the pandemic is over."

Acting Lt. Joseph O'Neal of the Honolulu Police Department's community outreach unit defended the robot's use in a media demonstration earlier this year. He said it has protected officers, shelter staff and residents by scanning body temperatures between meal times at a shelter where homeless people could quarantine and

get tested for COVID-19. The robot is also used to remotely interview individuals who have tested positive.

"We have not had a single person out there that said, 'That's scary, that's worrisome,'" O'Neal said. "We don't just walk around and arbitrarily scan people."

Police use of such robots is still rare and largely untested — and hasn't always gone over well with the public. Honolulu officials faced a backlash when a local news organization, Honolulu Civil Beat, revealed that the Spot purchase was made with federal relief money.

Late last year, the New York Police Department starting using Spot after painting it blue and renaming it "Digidog." It went mostly unnoticed until New Yorkers starting spotting it in the wild and posting videos to social media. Spot quickly became a sensation, drawing a public outcry that led the police department to abruptly return Digidog to its maker.

"This is some Robocop stuff, this is crazy," was the reaction in April from Democratic U.S. Rep. Jamaal Bowman. He was one of several New York politicians to speak out after a widely shared video showed the robot strutting with police officers responding to a domestic-violence report at a high-rise public housing building in Manhattan.

Days later, after further scrutiny from elected city officials, the department said it was terminating its lease and returning the robot. The expensive machine arrived with little public notice or explanation, public officials said, and was deployed to already over-policed public housing. Use of the high-tech canine also clashed with Black Lives Matter calls to defund police operations and reinvest in other priorities. □

New Russian lab briefly knocks space station out of position



This Thursday, July 29, 2021 image provided by NASA shows the 20-metric-ton (22-ton) Nauka module, also called the Multipurpose Laboratory Module as it approaches the International Space Station space station.

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
AP Science Writer

A newly arrived Russian science lab briefly knocked the International Space Station out of position Thursday when it accidentally fired its thrusters.

For 47 minutes, the space station lost control of its orientation when the firing occurred a few hours after docking, pushing the orbiting complex from its normal configuration. The station's position is key for getting power from solar panels and for communications. Communications with ground controllers also blipped out twice for a few minutes.

Flight controllers regained control using thrusters on other Russian components at the station to right the ship, and it is now stable and safe, NASA said.

"We haven't noticed any damage," space station program manager Joel Montalbano said in a late afternoon press conference. "There was no immediate danger at anytime to the crew."

Montalbano said the crew didn't really feel any movement or any shaking. NASA said the station moved 45 degrees out of attitude, about one-eighth of a complete circle. The complex was never spinning, NASA spokesman Bob Jacobs said.

NASA's human spaceflight chief Kathy Lueders called it "a pretty exciting hour." The incident caused NASA to postpone a repeat test flight for Boeing's crew capsule that had been set for Friday afternoon from Florida. It will be Boeing's second attempt to reach the 250-mile-high station before putting astronauts on board; software problems botched the first test.

Russia's long-delayed 22-ton (20-metric-ton) lab called Nauka arrived earlier Thursday, eight days after it launched from the Russian launch facility in Baikonur, Kazakhstan.

The launch of Nauka, which will provide more room for scientific experiments and space for the crew, had been repeatedly delayed because of technical problems. It was initially scheduled to go up in 2007. Stretching 43 feet (13 meters) long, Nauka became the first new compartment for the Russian segment of the outpost since 2010. On Monday, one of the older Russian units, the Pirs spacewalking compartment, undocked

from the station to free up room for the new lab.

Nauka will require many maneuvers, including up to 11 spacewalks beginning in early September, to prepare it for operation.

The space station is currently operated by NASA astronauts Mark Vande Hei, Shane Kimbrough and Megan McArthur; Oleg Novitsky and Pyotr Dubrov of Russia's Roscosmos space corporation; Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency astronaut Akihiko Hoshide and European Space Agency astronaut Thomas Pesquet.

In 1998, Russia launched the station's first compartment, Zarya, which was followed in 2000 by another big piece, Zvezda, and three smaller modules in the following years. The last of them, Rassvet, arrived at the station in 2010. □

Associated Press



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TV show 'Johnson' takes glimpse into Black male perspective

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Deji LaRay remembered when television shows like "Sex in the City" and "Insecure" captured the essence of friendships among women, but then realized there was hardly any male-driven stories being told in the same manner.

LaRay saw a lack of shows from the perspective of Black men and decided to create his own. He teamed up with retired NFL running back-turned-actor Thomas Q. Jones to develop the new series "Johnson," which premieres Sunday on Bounce TV. Cedric the Entertainer, star of "The Neighborhood" on CBS, is a co-executive producer. The series revolves around four lifelong friends — all sharing the same last name Johnson but not related. The lead characters are specifically written from the Black male point-of-view to explain why men make certain decisions that revolve around friendships, love and heartbreak.

LaRay said he wanted to insert "real, heartfelt and honest" conversations that men would have in the man cave or pool hall. "I felt like it was time to tell a story about men that I knew," said LaRay, who played roles in "Bosch," "Age of the Living Dead" and "Greenleaf." The actor chose the show's title



This image provided by Bounce shows Derrex Brady, from left, Thomas Q. Jones, Deji LaRay and Philip Smithey in a scene from "Johnson," which premieres Aug. 1, 2021, on Bounce TV.

Associated Press

because the surname Johnson is one of the most common within the African American community. "I just felt like there wasn't really a balance when it came to showing the Black male perspective on things that really matter, such as love and marriage and religion and politics," he continued. "This was a way to create an unfiltered voice and give other cultures and Black women a chance to peel back those layers and see how we really feel about certain topics." Cedric the Entertainer said he was hooked by the story's premise after reading the first draft. He felt compelled to work on the project after meeting with Jones then seeing LaRay's "sincerity of what he wanted to accomplish."

The legendary comedian said "Johnson" offers another glimpse of Black men who he says are sometimes depicted in society as violent alpha males, gang members and drug dealers. He said the series will highlight strong-willed men who are allowed to show their vulnerability similar to male leading roles in films such as "The Wood," "The Best Man" and "The Brothers." "We want people to find themselves in this story," he said. "I want people to see that this does really represent my friend group. Everybody over here don't fight. All my partners aren't hard. I got a friend who falls in love every time he sees a woman."

Along with LaRay and Jones, the series stars Philip Smithey, Derrex Brady and

comedian D.L. Hughley. The first season touches on several hard conversations including self-confidence, mental health and racism. Hughley said he was proud to work on the series because it dispels several stereotypes about Black men. "The one misconception is that we're not human, that we don't love, that we don't take care of our children," said Hughley, who plays a preacher turned podcaster and mentor of the four friends. "I think this gives you another vantage point."

Jones said the idea for "Johnson" was pitched to several networks but found a "perfect home" at Bounce TV. He said the network — which targets African Americans — afforded them more creative

control compared to going elsewhere.

"We wanted to make the show the way we wanted to make it," said Jones, who played in "P-Valley" and "Luke Cage." "Otherwise, it wouldn't be any different than other ones that you've seen. That's why we are proud and happy to be a part of the Bounce family, because they allowed us to do that."

Eric C. Rhone, a co-executive producer on the show, said pitching the idea for a series with four Black male leads is typically a challenge. But he said delivering the idea of their project was an easy one to sell to David Hudson, head of original programming at Scripps Networks.

"The reason he got it is because he's an African American man," Rhone said. "I think what happens in Hollywood, a lot of Black projects start out being really real, truthful and reflective of our culture. But by the time it's sold, and other people get their imprint on it, it oftentimes come out on the other end or what's aired is not the original project. It's not the same content. It's not the same cultural experience."

LaRay said it was imperative to maintain creative freedom to tell the Black male's perspective along with giving women on the show a powerful voice too. □



In this June 15, 2019 file photo, Amanda Knox gets emotional as she speaks at a Criminal Justice Festival at the University of Modena, Italy.

Associated Press

By MARK KENNEDY

AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Amanda Knox is speaking out

about her name being associated with the new film "Stillwater," saying any connection rips off "my

Amanda Knox blasts film 'Stillwater' for exploiting her case

story without my consent at the expense of my reputation."

"Stillwater" stars Matt Damon as a father who flies to France to help his estranged daughter, Allison, played by Abigail Breslin. She has been convicted and imprisoned for murdering her girlfriend in Marseille, in a case that has generated lurid headlines. Knox is never named on screen, but in interviews the filmmakers have noted her sensational case was an initial jumping off point

for the script. In tweets and an essay on the site Medium, Knox called out various publications and director Tom McCarthy for using her name to promote the movie. She wrote that his "fictionalized version of me is just the tabloid conspiracy guiltier version of me."

"Does my name belong to me? Does my face? What about my life? My story? Why is my name used to refer to events I had no hand in? I return to these questions because others con-

tinue to profit off my name, face, and story without my consent," she wrote. Knox was the subject of worldwide headlines after the murder in Perugia, Italy, of British student Meredith Kercher in 2007. Knox and Knox's then-boyfriend were placed under suspicion. Both were initially convicted, but after a series of flip-flop decisions, Italy's highest court threw out the convictions in 2015. An unrelated man is serving a 16-year sentence for the murder. □

AP sources: Lakers acquiring All-Star Westbrook from Wizards

By **JOE REEDY**
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles Lakers are acquiring All-Star point guard Russell Westbrook from the Washington Wizards for three players and the rights to first-round pick Isaiah Jackson. According to two people with knowledge of the deal, the Lakers are trading Kyle Kuzma, Kentavious Caldwell-Pope and Montrezl Harrell to Washington for Westbrook, who is a Los Angeles native and helped lead UCLA to a pair of Final Four appearances. The Lakers had the 22nd overall pick in Thursday's draft and selected Jackson, a 6-foot-11 forward from Kentucky.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal can't be officially announced until Aug. 6, when the salary cap becomes official and teams can also begin making moves for the upcoming season. The Lakers will also receive second-round picks from the Wizards in 2024 and '28. The Wizards also aren't holding on to Jackson. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver announced that Jackson's rights were traded by the Lakers to the Indiana Pacers via the Wizards a couple picks later.



In this May 29, 2021, file photo, Washington Wizards guard Russell Westbrook works with the ball in Game 3 in a first-round NBA basketball playoff series against the Philadelphia 76ers in Washington. Associated Press

This is the second time in three years that the Lakers have made a significant offseason trade. They acquired Anthony Davis from New Orleans in 2019 for Lonzo Ball, Brandon Ingram, Josh Hart and three first-round draft picks. Westbrook is the league's career leader in triple-doubles with 184 and gives the Lakers another playmaker to pair with All-Stars LeBron James and Davis. Los Angeles won the NBA title in 2020 but struggled during the second half of this season

when James and Davis were both out of the lineup due to injuries. Even though the trade isn't official for another week, Westbrook took to Twitter to thank Wizards fans, with one of his tweets ending "I will forever be grateful and appreciative of my experience with the organization. Thank you!" The Lakers fell to the seventh seed in the Western Conference and beat Golden State in the play-in game to make the playoffs before they were eliminated by the Phoenix

Suns in six games. Davis missed 30 regular-season games due to leg injuries and then the final 2 1/2 games against Phoenix with knee and groin ailments. James was out for 26 games in the regular season with a high right ankle sprain. Dennis Schröder played the point last season, and averaged 15.4 points, but he turned down an extension during the regular season to test free agency. The 32-year old Westbrook was drafted by Oklahoma City in 2008 and

spent his first 11 seasons with the Thunder. He was traded to Houston in 2019 and then dealt to Washington last season. In his lone season with the Wizards, he averaged a triple-double (22.2 points, 11.5 rebounds and 11.7 assists) for the fourth time in his 13-year career. He had 38 triple-doubles in 65 regular-season games as Washington made the playoffs for the first time since 2018. While the Lakers get their point guard, the Wizards get three solid contributors. Kuzma, a 26-year-old forward, has 146 regular-season starts over four seasons and averaged 12.9 points and 6.1 rebounds last season. Harrell, a 27-year-old center who will be going into his seventh season, averaged 18.7 points and 33.1 minutes per game in 68 starts in 2018-19, which was the season before Davis joined the Lakers. Caldwell-Pope, a 28-year-old guard, gives the Wizards a perimeter shooter. He converted on 41.3% of his 3-point attempts last season. Jackson averaged 8.6 points and 6.6 rebounds for Kentucky in his lone collegiate season. Most scouts consider him to be an excellent defender because of his skills near the basket. □

Busy at deadline, Indians trade OF Eddie Rosario to Braves

By **TOM WITHERS**
AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Eddie Rosario had moments for the Indians. Not nearly enough of them. Reshuffling its roster with an eye toward the future with several deals before the trading deadline Friday, Cleveland traded Rosario to the Atlanta Braves, who needed another quality hitter to make a run for the NL East. The Indians got veteran infielder Pablo Sandoval, and immediately released the 2012 World Series MVP. It was Cleveland's second significant trade in two days. On Thursday, the Indians essentially signaled

surrender in the AL Central by dealing second baseman Cesar Hernandez to the first-place White Sox for a minor league pitcher. The Indians made two other smaller deals on Friday. Rosario signed a one-year, \$8 million free agent contract this winter with the Indians. They were hoping the outfielder would hit for them the way he did with the Minnesota Twins, but Rosario was injured and never got rolling. The 29-year-old Rosario has been on the injured list since July 6 with an oblique strain, and isn't quite ready to return. He's batting .254 with seven homers and 46

RBIs in 78 games. "Eddie got off to a tough start," said Chris Antonetti, the Indians' president of baseball operations. "We saw stretches prior to him getting injured where he started to heat up, but then unfortunately went on the injured list with the oblique. "We just never did get to see the best of Eddie. I do think he's going to go over to Atlanta and be able to help them for the last month and a half for the season once he's ready to come off the injured list." The Braves will pay a portion of Rosario's contract, easing the financial burden on the Indians, who have



Cleveland Indians' Eddie Rosario runs the bases after hitting a solo home run in the third inning of a baseball game against the Baltimore Orioles in Cleveland, in this Thursday, June 17, 2021, file photo.

Associated Press

been ravaged by injuries and are quickly fading from the playoff chase. Atlanta's been in the market to bolster its lineup since losing its best player when All-Star outfielder

Ronald Acuña Jr. suffered a season-ending knee injury while trying to make a leaping catch earlier this month. The Braves also acquired outfielder Adam Duvall from Miami on Friday. □

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Fast day at pool, track on Day 7 of Tokyo Olympics

By JOSH DUBOW

AP Sports Writer

TOKYO (AP) — The Tokyo Games got their first swimming individual world record and a fast start to the track competition on Day 7 of the Olympics.

Tatjana Schoenmaker of South Africa won the women's 200-meter breaststroke with a time of 2 minutes, 18.95 seconds, breaking the mark of 2:19.11 set by Rikke Moller Pedersen of Denmark at the 2013 world championships in Barcelona.

The United States claimed the other two medals. Lilly King set a blistering pace early in the race and held on for a silver in 2:19.92. Annie Lazor grabbed bronze in 2:20.84.

"I wasn't expecting that at all," said Schoenmaker, who added to her silver in the 100 breast. "It couldn't have been a better race. It still just doesn't sink in, maybe one day."

It was the third world record at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre, with the first two coming in women's relays.

Track and field is underway at the Olympics, with the women laying down some very fast times in the 100 meters heats.

There were no major surprises in the opening session at the Olympic Stadium, other than those early times in what promises to be a tight women's 100 battle.

Defending Olympic champion Elaine Thompson-Herah won her heat in 10.82 seconds and fellow Jamaican and favorite Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce cruised



United States' Megan Rapinoe, left, celebrates with teammates after scoring the winning goal and defeating the Netherlands in a penalty shootout during a women's quarterfinal soccer match at the 2020 Summer Olympics, Friday, July 30, 2021, in Yokohama, Japan.

Associated Press

home in 10.84 to win hers. Marie-Josée Ta Lou of Ivory Coast laid down the fastest time of the heats in a surprising 10.78 seconds.

"I'm in shock, actually," Ta Lou said. "But I know I'm ready."

Six women finished in under 11 seconds. Teahna Daniels of the United States and Dina Asher-Smith of Britain also progressed. The women's 100 final is Saturday.

NO GOLDEN SLAM

There will be no Golden Slam for Novak Djokovic. The top-ranked Serb lost to Alexander Zverev of Germany 1-6, 3-6, 6-1 in the semifinals of the tennis tournament.

Djokovic was attempting to become the first man to win all four Grand Slam tournaments and Olympic gold in the same year. He won the Australian and French Opens as well as Wimbledon this year and needed the Olympic and U.S. Open titles to complete the col-

lection.

Steffi Graf in 1988 remains the only tennis player to achieve the Golden Slam. Zverev's opponent in the gold-medal match will be Karen Khachanov of the Russian Olympic Committee.

Djokovic came back on the court a little more than an hour later to play with Serbian partner Nina Stojanovic in the mixed doubles semifinals and lost that match, too, getting beaten by the Russian duo of Elena Vesnina and Aslan Karatsev 7-6 (4), 7-5.

SHOOTOUT

Megan Rapinoe converted the deciding penalty in a shootout and the United States advanced to the semifinals of the women's Olympic soccer tournament 4-2 following a 2-2 draw with the Netherlands. United States goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher stopped Vivianne Miedema's opening attempt in the shootout.

She then saved a shot from Aniek Nouwen before Rapinoe put her penalty away. The United States will next face Canada, which advanced to the semifinals 4-3 on penalties after a scoreless draw with Brazil in Rifu.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

Russian Evgeny Rylov has completed a backstroke sweep at the Tokyo Olympics. Rylov added the 200-meter backstroke title to his victory in the 100 back, winning with an Olympic-record time of 1 minute, 53.29 seconds.

The silver went to American Ryan Murphy in 1:54.15, while Luke Greenbank of Britain grabbed the bronze in 1:54.72.

Murphy was a double-gold medalist at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games, extending America's dominance of the backstroke events that went back to 1992.

Rylov ended the U.S. winning streak with his two golds in Tokyo. Murphy settled for a bronze and silver this time.

GOLDEN TRACK

Selemon Barega of Ethiopia won the first track and field gold medal of the Olympics with a victory in the men's 10,000 meters. Barega won in 27 minutes, 43.22 seconds to upset world champion and world-record holder Joshua Cheptegei of Uganda. Cheptegei took the silver medal and Jacob Kiplimo of Uganda was third.

DISQUALIFIED

A faulty exchange in the Olympic debut of the mixed 4x400 relay nearly

cost the U.S. a spot in the final.

The U.S. breezed to a victory in the first qualifying heat of the relay, but was disqualified because of a bad pass between Lynna Irby and Elija Godwin.

The U.S. team appealed and was reinstated and placed directly into the final. USA Track and Field did not give details of the reason for the appeal.

The decision could give Allyson Felix a chance to win her record-setting 10th Olympic medal. She is currently tied with Jamaican Merlene Ottey for the most for a female Olympian.

STREAKING

A'ja Wilson scored 20 points and Breanna Stewart added 15 to help the U.S. beat Japan 86-69 in the women's basketball tournament.

The U.S. has now won 51 consecutive games going back to the bronze medal game in the 1992 Olympics, although the team has looked far from sharp in its first two games at the Saitama Super Arena.

CRASH LANDING

American BMX racer Connor Fields was awake, stable and awaiting further medical evaluation at the hospital after a violent crash on the first lap of his qualifying heat.

The reigning gold medalist slammed into the turn coming off a jump and was hit by two other riders.

Medical personnel raced onto the course to attend to him before carrying him away on a stretcher to an ambulance at Ariake Urban Sports Park. □